

A N
AUTHOR'S CONDUCT

TO THE

P U B L I C,

STATED IN THE BEHAVIOUR OF

DR. WILLIAM CULLEN,

His MAJESTY'S Physician at Edinburgh,

Certainly there is little fairness in their dealings who have the best of every bargain they make. The world may think them expert as they get money, but it is impossible they can be honest. Real integrity proscribes all those stratagems of fraud and circumvention which the covetous and cunning are eternally practising.

MOIR'S Sermons.

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L O N D O N:

PRINTED FOR J. MURRAY, N° 32, FLEET-STREET.

MDCCLXXXIV.

AUTHOR'S CONDUCT

TO THE

PUBLISHERS

OF THE LITERATURE OF

DR. WILLIAM GULLEN

OF THE UNIVERSITY OF CAMBRIDGE

Cambridge: Printed by J. Bentham, at the University Press, 1841.

LONDON

Printed by J. Bentham, at the University Press, 1841.

Cambridge

Advertisement.

THE Case stated in the following pages is sufficient to show, that Authors are not always oppressed, or hardly treated by Booksellers; and that the former can, occasionally, behave to the Public, in a way which the latter, as exhibiting marks of too great flagrancy, would not dare to venture upon. If a Gentleman of Dr. Cullen's fortune and celebrity can, from motives unworthy of his character, give, by his example, a sanction to unjustifiable imposition, what may not be expected from Authors of inferior reputation and abilities!

It is with reluctance that the cause is submitted to the tribunal

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of

of the Public. But the author imagined he had no right to suppress the transaction, after having in vain tried every fair method of accommodation and compromise. Losers, it is said, have a right to complain ; but setting this adage aside, the present publication, it is thought, may produce more beneficial consequences, by the example it exhibits.

LET-

LETTER I.

MR. MURRAY, BOOKSELLER
IN LONDON, TO DR. WIL-
LIAM CULLEN, PHYSICIAN
AT EDINBURGH.

London, April 17, 1784.

DEAR SIR,

I Beg leave to acquaint you, that I have upon hand eighty-four volumes of your "First Lines," to the amount of sixteen pounds, as under, which you must be sensible will prove no better than waste paper, provided I am not permitted to complete them in sets; and as I understand it is not your intention to sell the two additional volumes now printing separately*,

* The edition of Dr. Cullen's "First Lines" complete, was advertised to be published in *five* volumes, although it has since been comprised in *four*. Mr. M. therefore wanted at this time the *fourth* and *fifth* volumes.

B 2

I flatter

I flatter myself you will not permit me to suffer the loss of sixteen pounds, for keeping your works constantly in my house, in order to serve you more than myself, by their sale. If by any means my sets can be completed, I shall require no more; or if it is agreeable for you to give me the new edition in exchange for the books I have upon hand, volume for volume, I shall rest perfectly satisfied.— It may be just necessary to mention, that no Bookseller here publishes a new edition of a book, with improvements, without exchanging it for the old, if any of the latter are found to be in the trade undisposed of. But without this information, my application, I dare say, will not appear to be either improper or unreasonable; and I shall wait for your answer, in full confidence that you will think so.

I am your's, &c.

J. MURRAY.

Dr. WILLIAM CULLEN.

P. S. 84 copies "Cullen's Lines," vols. 1 and 2, and binding 16l.

LET-

L E T T E R II.

FROM THE SAME, TO THE SAME.

London, May 21, 1784.

S I R,

I Wrote to you the 17th of April, of which you have a copy enclosed, because by my not being favoured with an answer, I am apprehensive it has miscarried. To the case stated in that letter I have little to add, save it be to observe, what you will readily admit, that no Bookseller would have kept any copies of your works by him, had he entertained the least suspicion, that after purchasing three volumes, singly or separately, as they appeared, you would have precluded him from pur-

B 3

chasing

chasing the subsequent ones in the same manner. I have said, that I kept your volumes in my house, fully more to promote your benefit than my own. I beg leave again to repeat this, which I think I can prove * ; and if I am to be left without redress, after acting in this manner, I shall think it extremely hard ; and I will venture to say, that there is no example similar to it in the annals of book-selling. The purchasers of *Hume*, *Gibbon*, *Blackstone*, in separate volumes, were never precluded from compleating their sets. *Whitaker* published the additions to a new edition of his *History of Manchester* sepa-

* Mr. Murray, in conjunction with the late Mr. Kincaid, of Edinburgh, bought *one impression*, consisting of 1000 copies, of the 1st vol. of Dr. Cullen's *First Lines*. For this they paid all expences of paper, printing, and advertising, and gave the author besides one hundred guineas. Upon a calculation it appeared, that the Booksellers could clear but sixteen shillings by the bargain, without allowing for bad debts, interest of money, &c. This was laid before Dr. Cullen, but he turned a deaf ear to all remonstrances upon the subject, and never would refund a penny. The public is therefore left to judge, whether the assertion that his books were sold more for the benefit of the Author than his Booksellers, is true or otherwise.

rate,

rate, in order to accommodate the purchasers of the old. *Howard* advertises, at this moment, a supplement to his book on *Prisons gratis* to his former purchasers; and *Hoole*, who had formerly published the first volume of his translation of *Aristo*, singly, when he finished the work, generously gave his subscribers the five volumes complete, exacting payment only for four *. No person, I believe, requires to have a volume from Dr. Cullen *gratis*. In my situation I ask but common justice, to be allowed after the usual man-

* It might have been added, that Lord Bankton, a celebrated Scots lawyer, having much improved and corrected his *Institutes of the Law of Scotland*, which alone would have made a folio pamphlet of half a guinea price; bound down his heir, that if the work should be reprinted, a Supplement containing his alterations, &c. should be also printed separate, and delivered *gratis* to the purchasers of the *first edition* of his work. Such were that Judge's sentiments of the justice he owed to the public. His Will now exists, and Dr. Cullen is referred to it.

At this moment, the following words are added to a public advertisement, announcing a new edition of *Bubb Doddington's Diary* being in the press: "If any additions
" are made to the Appendix, they will be given *gratis* to
" the purchasers of the first impression."

ner to complete my sets, or to have my volumes exchanged, or to be reimbursed their prime cost.—I shall esteem it obliging to have an answer to this letter, as sixteen pounds, though not much money to a rich man, is too much for me to lose who am not rich.

I am, with respect, Sir,

Your very obedient humble servant.

J. MURRAY.

Dr. WILLIAM CULLEN,
Edinburgh.

LET.

L E T T E R III.

DR. CULLEN TO MR. MURRAY.

DEAR SIR,

I Have many pardons to beg for not answering your first letter, but it came upon me when, by my visiting, teaching, and printing, I was more hurried than ever I had been in my life. I put off answering you, therefore, till I should have more leisure, and that leisure is hardly yet come; and perhaps also I was more negligent in writing, because I did not find that I could give you an answer that would be agreeable, but I must give it you now such as it is.

I have not time to discuss matters fully, and must tell you shortly, that your reasoning is not at all satisfying, and your examples not at all in point. I think your having the books on hand has been very much your own fault; and on every consideration I cannot comply with your request,

request, of giving an indemnification, which I can as little afford as you can.

You mistake the matter much, in supposing the two last volumes as merely sequels of the two first. The two first are very much new, and I should be sorry to find any body trusting to the former edition of them; and the giving the two last volumes to sell off the two first of the former edition, I would consider as an imposition on the public, and a piece of knavery that I shall never practise*.

Although I think your present demands unreasonable, I am sorry when I cannot comply with any you make upon me. I have been always disposed to deal with you rather than with any man of the trade; and I think it is not my fault if I have not always done so. Believe me to be, sincerely,

Your most obedient servant,

WILLIAM CULLEN.

Edinburgh, May 27, 1784.

* Why then does he not collect his alterations and improvements, and publish them separately, as done by other Authors, for the benefit of the purchasers of his former editions?

L E T T E R IV.

MR. MURRAY TO DR. CULLEN.

London, June 1, 1784.

S I R,

I Have at last received your answer to my letters, which does not barely surprise, but really astonishes me. The indemnification I have required, is agreeable to every rule of honesty and fair dealing among men, and what I hardly think any other Author in Europe, situated as you are, would have refused to comply with. A regard to common justice, as well as an attention to your own character in the world, which, if I am not deceived, must suffer by a publication of this transaction, ought surely to have weighed with you.

“ You

“ You think, that having the books on
“ hand is very much my own fault.”

This is an extraordinary assertion. By what means is it my own fault? Did I ever refuse to supply a customer? Do Authors in general impute it for a fault, that Booksellers keep their works in readiness for sale? Or, in the present case, did you, by yourself, or your agent, ever intimate to me, the mercenary scheme you have carried into execution, of publishing a new edition of your *First Lines*, with a fixed design to exclude your former *subscribers from completing their sets*, and thereby to compel them to buy the book anew? On the contrary, were not your proceedings, when you offered the copy for sale, by various agents in England and Scotland, industriously kept *a secret from me*? This was not a proper return to a man, who had exerted himself a good deal in the circulation of your works, by which the chief advantage resulted to the *Author*, not to the Bookseller. And after this can you insist, that the volumes I have on hand (converted by a manœuvre now
into

into waste paper) proceeds from any fault of mine? Or from the facts stated, can you alledge, seriously, that you was *more disposed to deal with me than any other man in the trade?*

The purchasers of your three former volumes are constantly applying to me for the fourth; and an universal clamour is excited among them, when it is understood that they will not be permitted to buy that volume alone; but if they want Dr. Cullen's *First Lines*, must purchase the whole work anew. On this occasion they use expressions (mixed with menaces against me, who surely am innocent) on the conduct of the Author, which I will not repeat, whatever my own sentiments on the occasion may be. But if they are exasperated at being excluded from completing *one* set, the loss must affect me much more, who have upon hand nearly one hundred volumes, for which I have paid ready money, that went into your pocket; and every shilling of which I am, according to your generous decision, now to lose.

Of

Of your behaviour the opinion here is not singular. The sentiments of the people in Scotland seem to be the same with those of the people of England upon this business, if the following extract of a letter from your late Bookseller Mr. William Creech, of the 25th ult. from Edinburgh, is to be credited:—" Dr. Cul-
 " len has behaved in a strange manner to
 " the public, by withholding the fourth
 " volume from the purchasers of the three
 " former, and obliging them to buy the
 " whole book anew. . . I am perfectly
 " clear, that the purchasers of the three
 " former volumes have an undoubted
 " ground of action against him.—I mean
 " to publish a notice in the news-papers,
 " with my name, stating the facts, and in-
 " forming the public, that the withhold-
 " ing of the fourth volume is not owing
 " to me, but the Doctor himself."

This letter is the more to be regarded, as it proceeds from no previous or concerted communication betwixt Mr. C. and myself, for I have *never yet* mentioned the subject to him in any shape whatever; and
 he

he is, at this moment, totally ignorant of the application I have made to you in all its stages. It arises, therefore, spontaneously from the nature of the transaction itself, which I have before said, and now repeat, is unparalleled in the history of bookselling. This opinion, supported by the uniform and general testimony of your subscribers, makes it necessary to lay the matter, as it is, before the public, who will fix the blame where it ought to be fixed, and not impute to their Booksellers a mercenary and dishonourable act, if they can clearly exculpate themselves.

You have, indeed, said, *that my reasoning is not at all satisfying, my examples not at all in point, and that you cannot comply with my request of giving an indemnification, which you can as little afford as I can* *.

I quote you, I think, fairly, nor will I make a parade of my strength by refuting

* Upon a moderate computation, Dr. Cullen has realized 2000*l.* by the sale of his *First Lines of the Practice of Physic*. A work which, with ease, might be comprised in one volume, inferior in size to Dr. Buchan's *Domestic Medicine*, which sells at 6*s.* 6*d.* in boards.

such cogent arguments ; if the public is convinced by your reasoning, and satisfied with your conduct, I shall submit quietly to the loss of sixteen pounds in your service, although I am deprived by it of all my legal profits upon all the books I have sold on your account since the commencement of our acquaintance, which is now of fourteen years duration.

I am, Sir,

Your obedient and humble servant,

J. MURRAY.

Dr. WILLIAM CULLEN.

L E T-

L E T T E R V.

MR. MURRAY TO DR. CULLEN*.

London, June 4, 1784.

DEAR SIR;

I CONFESS that I have received some civilities from you, which I have endeavoured, as far as was within my power, to return; but if I had not, they did not infer that I was tamely to suffer myself to be injured, when you was disposed to injure me: and I am sorry that I must look upon your refusal to indemnify me for the volumes of your Works, which I

* Being yet unwilling to come to a public rupture with a gentleman of Dr. Cullen's eminence, and for whom I *had* entertained a regard, I transmitted to him the preceding printed pages in the present letter; which produced the correspondence that follows.

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have

have upon hand, as a material injury. I have, before this period, sold your books without any profit to myself, and without making an outcry about it. But the loss of both principal and interest is alarming; and therefore, since you are ungenerous, I must be just, and submit the question betwixt us to the public.

Whether you believe me or not, I am sincere in declaring my regret for being obliged to make this appeal, or to send you the inclosed printed paper: and had there been a single voice amongst all the gentlemen, before whom I had occasion to mention the matter, to defend your conduct, I would have quashed my own feelings, and have submitted in silence to my loss. But the action is so flagrant, and in its end tends so much to destroy all mutual confidence amongst men, that no person has yet appeared that would attempt to justify it. I am warranted therefore in acting as I have done. I must live by my profession as you do by your's. The tenor of my conduct has shewn, that I am not apt to complain for trifles. The loss in the present case,
 though

though too much, will not ruin me ; and it is the ungenerous action, and its tendency, that I chiefly complain of.

My answer to your letter you will find marked N° IV. in the inclosed paper, which is the only copy yet printed ; nor shall I print more copies, or put the pamphlet in circulation, before the 16th ; when, if I am favoured with no satisfactory return, I shall conclude that you do not object to the publication, and proceed to advertise it at a shilling price, and as proper to bind up with the new edition of your First Lines.

I am, &c.

Dr. WILLIAM CULLEN.

L E T T E R VI.

DR. CULLEN TO MR. MURRAY.

Edinburgh, June 10, 1784.

S I R,

AFTER taking so much pains as I have done, to enlarge, improve, and correct the former edition of my First Lines, I readily believed that my new edition would be worth its price, even to those who had the former; and I have found many persons of this opinion. I must say further, that I have been very averse from any person's trusting to my former edition, who desired to know the true state of my doctrine; and I have therefore avoided giving encouragement to
their

their doing so. Not, however, desiring to force my new edition upon any one, I was always willing that the fourth volume should be sold separately, and with that view I took care that the fourth volume should be printed in greater number than the others had been; many copies have accordingly been sold separately, and I have now desired it to be publicly advertised, that any person may purchase the fourth volume by itself*. So far in an-

* Dr. Cullen *never* meant to publish the fourth volume *separately*; he sold the property of the whole work under a condition not to do it; he expressly says in page 8, that *it would be a piece of knavery he should never practise*. Mr. Creech, in page 12, proves, that he *never intended it*; to this day [July 8th] the *fourth volume* is not to be had separate in London; and Mr. Creech, by a pointed letter which follows, puts the Doctor's *real intentions* respecting this matter out of doubt. With what face therefore can the author assert, that he was *ALWAYS willing that the fourth volume should be had separate*? I am sorry to say, that this is a mere *assertion*, and void of truth. The *4th* volume, I am told, does not connect with the first edition of the *third*, which, were there no other evidence, is a sufficient proof of itself that it was never meant for separate publication; and he is now compelled to print a new edition of the fourth, with alterations to remedy this inconvenience. But he does it with a heavy heart, because it will subject him to an unforeseen drawback, and is an act of justice he had never imagined he should be *obliged to perform*.

swer to your's of the 4th current I have thought proper to explain myself; but with respect to the other particulars of that letter, I have nothing to add to what I have formerly written. Your representations are false and imperfect; and I could point out this very fully, but I think it would not be becoming in me to enter into discussions with you, either in writing or print; and I despise your malice. There is, however, one unfair representation I must state to you: In your giving a copy of the first letter you addressed to me of the 17th of April, which is still in my hands, you have suppressed the Postscript †, from which it would have appeared to the public, that the copies of the First Lines, pretendedly ‡, then in your hands, were of the first and second volumes only; and that your demand of completing your sets, was for both the third and fourth volumes of the new edition. *If your demand had been for the fourth volume only, I should probably*

† The Postscript is now restored.

‡ Why *pretendedly*, when they are offered to be produced?

have

have complied with your request; but to enable you to impose upon the public §, I thought would be as unjust in me, as seemingly intended by you. I find I must still take notice of another particular in your letter. You take advantage of a civil expression of mine, to insinuate that it implies a contradiction in my language and conduct. I had said that I was willing to prefer you to any other person of the trade; and that I formerly was so, you know to be true; but that I have not been so for some time past, is also true; and I could give reasons for this change of my conduct, that I believe would be very satisfying to every person who knows you ||.

Adieu,

WILLIAM CULLEN.

§ What does the gentleman mean by *my* imposing upon the public? Mutato nomine—de *te* fabula narratur.

|| Dr. Cullen, besides what he advances in this place, utters reflections against my private character in several other parts of his letters. Assertions unsupported by any sort of proof or argument, and indeed sometimes contrary both to proof and argument, are too familiar to him. A simple denial

therefore is a sufficient refutation of *bare assertions*. But in this case I will go further: I throw the gauntlet at his feet, and dare him to advance one well-supported fact in my dealings with him, contrary to good faith, or what is esteemed fair and honest among mankind. I scorn in this case to recriminate; and shall only add, that I have shown a liberality in my transactions with him as a bookseller, which as an author he has never yet equalled.

LET-

L E T T E R VII.

MR. MURRAY TO DR. CULLEN.

London, June 17, 1784.

S I R,

I AM favoured with your letter of the 10th Inst. which, I am sorry to say, lays you as open to censure as any person who is your enemy could wish: but I am not your enemy, and it will be your own fault if the affair betwixt us should come to a public discussion.

In your letter you say, "If your demand had been for the fourth volume only, I should probably have complied with your request." Now, although I still see an injury done to the purchasers of the

the two first volumes, in being denied the third, equally with the fourth, to complete their sets, yet I consider the publication of the fourth volume separately as *some accommodation* to the public. I am therefore willing to meet your idea, and to accept 84 copies of the fourth volume, or 21 sets complete of the 4 volumes, for the 84 copies, vol. 1 and 2, in my possession.

I have to add, that notwithstanding your advice, the fourth volume is not yet advertised in London; and your Bookseller, Mr. Cadell, to whom I have sent to-day and yesterday, refuses to sell it singly: but if my overture, which indeed may be named your own, is agreed to, I must have notice of it in course, with an order upon Mr. Cadell for the 84 copies vol. 4. which can be made up to that gentleman by your Edinburgh publisher, without obstructing the sale of the new edition in any shape, as he is provided with more copies than he can possibly dispose of, before the copies of vol. 4. which I desire, are replaced; and it is obvious, that without *a speedy supply,*

supply, I am in danger of losing the sale of the volumes wanted.

If you see the propriety of this mode of settling the business, I shall be extremely well pleased, and shall be happy at all times, to remain respectfully,

Sir, &c.

J. MURRAY.

P. S. I shall wait for your answer till the 27th Inst. when, if I receive none, I shall presume myself to be at liberty to act free of all engagements: and the Postscript, whose omission you complain of, shall be restored to its place.

LET.

LETTER VIII.

DR. CULLEN TO MR. MURRAY.

Edinburgh, June 22, 1784.

S I R,

YOUR'S of the 15th current came to hand only yesterday, and when I happened to be in the country, else you would have had an answer in course.

It was owing to some awkward scruples of Mr. Cadell's *, that the advertising the fourth volume to be sold separately was not done, as it was here, a fortnight ago ; and it has been owing to the same scru-

* Would Mr. Cadell have retained any *awkward scruples*, had he been instructed from the beginning, that the author was ALWAYS *willing that the fourth volume should be had separate* ? It was not before the 9th of July that the 4th volume was sold *separate* in London.

ples

ples that he refused to sell you copies of it. These scruples, however, are now, I hope, removed, for yesterday 250 copies were put on board a ship for him, and to enable him to sell them separately without his breaking upon the sets he formerly received. This will allow you to get as many copies of the fourth volume as you please to demand, at the price you and Mr. Cadell can agree upon, and that to be sure will be the same he sells them for to other people.

This is all I can do to gratify you ; and I don't understand how you came to harp upon the affair of compleating your sets, to which I have given you an answer before, and shall now add, that the first and second volume lay upon your hands, because you demanded and took an extravagant price for them. Mr. Creech informs me, that he gave you the copies at 3*s.* 3*d.* and I know that you demanded and took from your customers for the volume in boards 6*s.* It was therefore by no means for my interest that you kept them in your shop. With respect to the third volume,
you

you had an opportunity, while it was on sale for many months last year, of completing your sets †, if you had thought proper so to do: and I can't find what pretence you have to demand it of me now, after I had made it a new book.

I don't think it necessary to say more at present; but that without either fearing or desiring a quarrel with you, I leave you at full liberty to take what measures you may think proper for yourself.

Your's, &c.

WILLIAM CULLEN.

UPON his last letter the author firmly relied for retrieving his character, and obtaining a victory. For although some of his friends, acknowledging the impropriety and folly of his conduct, condescended to request a delay of the present publication till they should hear from him, yet it was without effect; for building upon the

† Could 1000 copies of the third volume supply 3000 customers, who had purchased the *first* and *second* volumes? Into such an absurd defence however is that man reduced, who departs from the plain paths of equity and rectitude.

weight

weight of his facts and arguments, these interferences produced nothing. It is to be hoped, however, that he maintains the doctrines contained in his First Lines upon firmer grounds, than he does the honour of his conduct in the present transaction; for if he does not, it requires no gift of prophecy to affirm, that they will not be very durable.

There is a meanness in Dr. Cullen's descending to the particulars specified in the foregoing epistle, which a little mind could only prove equal to. Every man, like our author, has not dipped into the mystery of bookselling; and it would require that the reader should possess some knowledge of the profession, to speak intelligibly upon the subject. But let us not decline meeting him even upon this ground, since he has chosen it.

Dr. Cullen is accurate in stating the price Mr. Murray paid for his volumes. Is it however to be supposed, that the then proprietor Mr. Creech would sell at the price mentioned, without an advantage to himself? If it is admitted that he would
not,

not, Mr. Creech must have had a *superior profit* to Mr. Murray; and the author should have felt some gratitude for the latter who made a purchase of 600 volumes of his works at one time, and on inferior terms. Should there be sophistry in this reasoning, yet why does not Dr. Cullen complain equally of Mr. Creech in the business? But it already appears that Mr. Creech complains loudly of him; and in the letter which follows he enlarges upon the subject, and asserts, that he never made *twenty shillings* by his connection with this liberal-minded physician. In this point too the public will be apt to believe him, when it is known, that in his transactions with booksellers, Dr. Cullen never regarded any man's advantage but his own. But there are a few other circumstances in his charge of extortion upon Mr. Murray that must be attended to, and which the dull memory of Dr. Cullen has not permitted him to detail.

From his letter the reader is naturally led to believe, that his books were sent unto Mr. Murray's house, at 3s. 3d. *per* volume,

volume, clear of all other expences; but this is by no means the fact. Dr. Cullen has omitted *freight and charges* from Leith, and *insurance* in time of war, *warehouse-rent*, *interest of money*, (for Mr. Murray had no credit given him) *bad debts*, and above all *advertising*. Every one of these *items* fell upon Mr. Murray, and advertising alone cost him ten guineas. For although the *literary property* of the book remained with the author, he would not defray one penny of this expence, which all other authors, in similar circumstances, usually do. Will Mr. Murray then be accused of extortion, when it is known that, after all these deductions, he retailed the book to the trade in London at 4*s.* 4*d.* *per* volume. His neat profits therefore, attended with the risque of bad debts, &c. must have been from 2*d.* to 3*d.* *per* volume. Let Dr. Cullen's brother physicians, Doctors Monro, Duncan, Gregory, Home, and Hamilton, &c. &c. at Edinburgh, be asked, if in their dealings they ever esteemed that booksellers imposed upon them for exacting larger profits than

D

this?

this? And let the principal booksellers in the kingdom be required to give their opinion, if they would agree to a purchase on the terms on which Mr. Murray took Dr. Cullen's book?—

Here it may be necessary to enquire, what remuneration has accrued to Dr. Cullen himself for the labour of his writings; and by contrasting his moderation with that of his bookseller, leave it to the public to condemn whoever shall be found to be guilty of the greatest extortion. This is meeting the author on his own ground, and in going over it a regard to truth shall be strictly observed.

Dr. Cullen originally retailed his *First Lines* as a hawker does gingerbread, in fragments or detached pieces as he wrote them, to his pupils at the door of his lecture-room, at the price of six-pence, more or less, according to the portion of matter furnished. How much he gained by this traffic is rather uncertain, but as it lasted for some years, it must have been considerable. He has since, by a *general sale*, disposed of 6000 volumes of the same work,

work, for which he has actually touched *two shillings* profit upon *each volume*, without contingency, risque, or uncertainty. After this harvest he added a *fourth volume*, and has now sold the *copy*, or *literary property*, of the *whole work* for 1200*l.* Still, however, there remained some gleanings, and he availed himself even of these: accordingly, as the new edition was printed, he took measures to sell it over again, volume by volume, to his pupils, taking their names down in writing, in order to insure their purchase of the whole book; and receiving from them gentleman's price, but accounting himself to *his* principal, on the terms of a bookseller. Thus he secured to himself the double advantages, both of physician to his Majesty and of a sagacious tradesman. He affirms, that Mr. Murray sold his volumes at 6*s.* each in boards to gentlemen. So has Dr. Cullen done; so has every bookseller done; and so Mr. Murray would have done, and with more advantage to himself, had the transaction betwixt Mr. Creech and him never existed. Have you, Doctors Blair, Ferguson, Millar,

or any other public professor, acted in this manner? Would not your liberal spirits have rejected with scorn a mode of conduct so sordid and reproachful in its nature? Or would you, or any man upon the face of the earth, with pretensions to common honesty, after giving their works to the public at different times in different volumes, say to their purchasers, you cannot have the last volume without you purchase all the former ones over again? Any attempt to justify an action of this kind is worse than the action itself. Every man of honour resents it: yet the author affects to have acted with perfect propriety! He is not however totally unsusceptible to feeling. There exists a struggle in his breast, betwixt the principle of avarice and the saving of appearances. He is therefore hurried into inconsistencies and contradictions; and it is painful to mark the agitation of his mind in this conflict: *Giving the two last volumes, he says, to sell off the two first, I would consider as an imposition on the public, and as a piece of knavery that*

that I shall never practise *. But after the receipt of my papers he found this ground to be untenable. He then becomes of a different mind, and expresses himself in direct contradiction to his former declaration; but without assigning a reason for his new light: *Not however desiring*, he now unblushingly writes, *to force my new edition upon any one, I was ALWAYS willing that the fourth volume should be sold separately; and with that view, I took care that the fourth volume should be printed in greater number than the others had been; many copies have accordingly been sold separately, and I have now desired it to be publicly advertised, that any person may purchase the fourth volume by itself* †.

Surely, my dear Sir, you forget, that this separate publication is the very piece of knavery you declared you would never practise. And what reason can be assigned for publishing the *fourth* volume separate, and not the *third*? Of the first volume 3000 copies were printed; of the *third* volume but 1000. Will 1000 co-

* Letter III.

† Letter VI.

pies of the third therefore, supply 3000 purchasers of the *first*? It requires sound logic to reconcile such an inconsistency.

Again, when Mr. Murray applied to have his sets completed: *On every consideration*, says the worthy author, *I cannot comply with your request of giving an indemnification which I can as little afford as you can* †. When, however, the atrociousness of the refusal began to press upon his character, he altered his mind: *If your demand*, he writes to his correspondent, *had been for the fourth volume only, I should probably have complied with your request* §. Now would any man believe, that when this overture, made by himself, was accepted, he would shamefully have exposed himself to additional censure by retracting it; and thus bring it in proof, that no reliance was to be had upon his *own proposal*, delivered even in writing. *I am willing*, Mr. Murray answered him, *to meet your idea, and to accept 84 copies of the fourth volume, for the 84 volumes 1 and 2 in my possession* ||. In reply to this, Mr. Murray is told, with

† Letter III.

§ Letter VI.

|| Letter VII.

the utmost effrontery, that he may be supplied with as many copies of the fourth volume as he pleased—at the same price with other people*. My good and conscientious Doctor, it requires no ghost from the grave to tell me that I can purchase books for money. But if your offer, which has been recited, means any thing, it is, that you consented to the indemnification required, and was disposed to give me the fourth volume in exchange for the volumes in my possession, which, by your unfair behaviour, had been rendered of no use.

But to expose the shuffling of this weak man in every point of view would be endless. Throughout the whole business he has exhibited much meanness, equivocation, and contradiction; and all to retain a little sordid pelf, obtained not very honourably, at the expence of his benefactors. His conduct indeed affords a striking instance of human weakness; and it is to be lamented, that a person who is so eminent in his line, and so much celebrated for professional skill, should de-

* Letter VIII.

grade his character, from considerations far below the regard or consideration of a gentleman. It is, nevertheless, necessary to expose culprits of his description, in order, if possible, to guard individuals against the perniciousness of example; which is the more dangerous, when the author enjoys considerable rank in the republic of letters and science.

To conclude, it is only necessary to insert the following Letter, which corroborates the honourable *intentions* of Dr. Cullen, and proves, that to these pages alone, the public is indebted for a separate publication of his 4th volume. This is one point carried, which the author of the present narrative feels some satisfaction to have obtained, whatever trifling loss he may himself have suffered.—It is proper further to add, that the Letter itself is a volunteer; and totally unsolicited, Mr. Murray having *never* corresponded with Mr. Creech *in any shape* upon the subject.

L E T-

L E T T E R IX.

MR. CREECH, BOOKSELLER, AT
EDINBURGH, TO MR. MURRAY.

Edinburgh, June 10, 1784.

DEAR SIR,

TILL within this quarter of an hour,
that Dr. Cullen called at my house,
I was totally ignorant of what was passing
between you and him.—I could have
wished that you had not made use of my
letter in print without my knowledge: but
as it only states truth, and what I had be-
fore said to the Doctor and his new pub-
lisher, I do not see that it should give of-
fence.—It was a duty I owed to myself to
stand vindicated to the public, from what
must have appeared to them base and un-
E becoming

becoming a gentleman.—I had refused to treat for the property of the book, unless the fourth volume was given separately to the public.—It was certainly unhandsome and unjust to withhold the fourth volume from the public, and to make that an argument to enhance the value of the property, as they would be obliged to buy the whole anew.—I was frequently abused for not delivering the fourth volume to those who had bought the other three; and was told, that it must be a trick of the bookseller, for Dr. Cullen was incapable of behaving so.—When I met with this, it was high time to vindicate myself; and I even went so far as to tell many, that demanded the fourth volume, that they were welcome to prosecute me, and that I would lead an action where it ought to lay.—The fourth volume was not only withheld, but when the four volumes were published together, although not a sheet larger than formerly, the book came out at 28s. instead of 24s.—This I also thought proper to state in the notice I drew up for the public.

As

As the matter has been so much spoken of in London, I think it requisite to put it in your power to vindicate me in the matter.

The Doctor has informed me, that he has now given orders to advertise the 4th volume to be had separately; and therefore I have withheld my advertisement to the public.—The number, however, he mentioned, are by far insufficient.—The alterations, I apprehend, are not so material, as to render the first volumes you have useless. I think you have an undoubted right to have them made perfect sets, or the money returned.—All the books I ever had from the Doctor I paid in advance, and you know I never could have made a 1/. by the bargain. Had I any of the three 1st volumes remaining, I would insist on their being taken back, or made perfect.

I am,

Dear Sir, &c.

W. CREECH.

F I N I S.